



Terry Tamminen  
Agency Secretary  
Cal/EPA



## Department of Toxic Substances Control

5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, California 90630



Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor

September 2, 2004

Attn: County Clerk/Recorder  
Office of the County Clerk  
Santa Barbara County Office Building  
401 Cypress Avenue  
Lompoc, California 93436

### CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT NOTICES OF EXEMPTION FOR INTERIM REMEDIAL ACTION AT SITE 21 -- FIRE TRAINING AREA, VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE, CALIFORNIA

Pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), please find enclosed the draft Notices of Exemption (NOE) for the proposed removal action at Vandenberg Air Force Base Site 21 -- Fire Training Area. This draft NOE has been reviewed by the Department of Toxic Substances Control's Office of Environmental Analysis, Regulations & Audits (OEARA) and OEARA's comments have been incorporated in the enclosed NOE.

The NOE is being sent to you for posting in the Office of the County Clerk pursuant to California Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 21092 and 21092.3. The public announcement for the required thirty (30) day comment period will be released to the local newspaper by September 7, 2004.

Please call Quang Than at (714) 484-5352 if you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Emad B. Yemut, P.E., Unit Chief  
Federal Facilities Unit A  
Office of Military Facilities

Enclosure

cc: See next page.

Office of the County Clerk  
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cc: Ms. Kim Foreman Public Participation Branch  
Southern California Unit  
Department of Toxic Substances Control  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, California 90630

Mr. Eric Maher  
Office of Environmental Analysis, Regulations & Audits  
Department of Toxic Substances Control  
1001 "I" Street, Room 1-103  
P.O. Box 806  
Sacramento, California 95812-0806

**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
State Clearinghouse  
P.O. Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**From:** Department of Toxic Substances Control  
Site Mitigation and Brownfields Reuse Program  
Office of Military Facilities  
Southern California Operations  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, California 90630

**Project Title:** Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) Interim Removal Action (IRA) at Installation Restoration Program (IRP) Site 21, Fire Training Area, Vandenberg Air Force Base (AFB)

**Project Location – Specific:** Site 21 is located on Burton Mesa approximately 1.75 miles east of the Pacific Ocean, southwest of the main runway at Vandenberg AFB on the northwest corner of the intersection of Tangair and Mira Roads

**Project Location – City:** Unincorporated, near Lompoc

**Project Location – County:** Santa Barbara

**Description of Project:**

## DRAFT

Site 21, the former fire training area, is located on Burton Mesa approximately 1.75 miles east of the Pacific Ocean, southwest of the main runway at Vandenberg AFB on the northwest corner of the intersection of Tangair and Mira Roads. In this interim removal action, about 13,000 cubic yards (equivalent to 19,500 tons) of soils contaminated with metals, total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and dibenzofurans/dioxins will be excavated and disposed of at an appropriate landfill. Standard engineering and construction practices, such as the use of water spray to control dust, will be used to minimize potential environmental impacts during excavation activities. Perimeter air monitoring for public safety, and personal air monitoring for worker safety will be conducted. Excavated soils will be placed into a designated, plastic-lined, soil storage area. Soils will be covered with plastic, and temporarily stockpiled while awaiting the results of waste characterization tests. The excavation will be backfilled with clean fill, re-graded, and seeded.

Samples will be collected from the sides and the bottom of the excavated areas and tested to confirm that contaminated soils have been removed and that site specific cleanup goals have been achieved. Final cleanup goals have been established as 0.6 mg/kg for benzene, 0.062 mg/kg for benzo(a)pyrene, 3.9 pg/G for dioxins, 8.9 mg/kg for ethylbenzene, 23,000 mg/kg for iron, 150 mg/kg lead, 0.22 mg/kg for PCBs, 0.053 for trichloroethylene (TCE), 200 mg/kg for TPH and 500 mg/kg for TPH as diesel deeper than 10 feet. These values were established based upon consultation with a DTSC toxicologist and staff of the Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Luis Obispo Region. They represent a site specific application of the U.S. EPA Region IX Preliminary Remediation Goals (PRGs) and they are the criteria for unrestricted/residential use.

The time necessary to complete this activity is estimated to be about two months. Cleanup activities will be conducted in the summer in order to avoid winter rains and the potential for any surface water runoff. The depth of excavation is mostly between 5 to 10 feet. Measures such as establishing exclusion zone and cutting proper sideslope in the deeper excavation area will be taken to comply with Title 8 Cal-OSHA requirements regarding confined space.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Department of Toxic Substances Control

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Department of the Air Force  
Vandenberg Air Force Base  
Contact: Ms. Beatrice Kephart

**Exempt Status:** *(check one)*

- ☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);  
☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(A));

- ☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b), ; 15269(b)(c));  
☐ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_  
☒ General Rule (Sec. 15061(b)(3))

**Exemption Title:** With certainty, no possibility of a significant effect on the environment.

**Reasons Why Project is Exempt:**

## DRAFT

The proposed interim remedial action has only limited activities. It will not create any significant environment impact because:

1. The site is located within the boundaries of Vandenberg AFB, an isolated, active military installation. It lies southwest of the main runway at Vandenberg AFB. There is no access available to the area by the general public, and access by non-essential personnel will be restricted during soil removal activities. The nearest potential residential receptors at Military Family Housing are more than four miles away, and the nearest city, City of Lompoc, is about eight miles away.
2. The soil removal will mostly take place in or adjacent to previously disturbed areas such as burn pits, a drainage ditch, and a building. Two ecological surveys were conducted 1996 and 1997 by the Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Marine Biology and the Museum of Systematics and Ecology, University of California, Santa Barbara for Vandenberg AFB, California. The results of these surveys suggest that habitats are not located adjacent to the buildings and roads and therefore the soil removal will have minimal impact to the surrounding habitats.
3. Site 21 was previously cleared by the Base Cultural Resource Department and Base Civil Engineers (for potential impact on cultural and paleontological resources) to conduct excavation in the remedial investigations (baseline in 1985; soil gas surveys in 1986, phases I and II in 1993 and 1997; and supplemental in 2000) and to conduct interim removal actions in 1997 and 2000. According to Kathy Gerber, Vandenberg AFB site contact for the Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence, Site 21 is not suspected to be located in an area known for cultural and paleontological resources. Versar, the Air Force contractor for this IRA, will obtain a site specific work permit or dig permit from the Base, which requires clearance from the Base Cultural Resources for Native American burial sites, archaeological, historical, etc, from the Base before soil removal begins.
4. The contaminated soils to be removed (approximately 13,000 cubic yards or 19,500 tons) are not of a reactive or explosive nature. Excavated materials will be handled by licensed and registered transporters, in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. The trucks will be inspected and cleaned before leaving the site, including pressure washing of the tires if necessary, to be sure that they will not spread contaminated soil on the roads.
5. The transportation route to the disposal site consists of well maintained, all-purpose state highways and county roads. Leaving the Base at the Lompoc gate, the excavated soil will be transported to the Santa Maria landfill, the Buttonwillow landfill, or the Kettleman Hills landfill depending on whether waste characterization test results indicate the soil to be non-hazardous or hazardous.
6. Prior to backfilling with clean soil and re-grading, soil sampling will be conducted to ensure that all contamination above clean-up levels, as previously described, has been removed. Measures will be taken to ensure workers safety before backfilling operations take place, such as fencing off excavated areas and cutting proper sideslopes to prevent sidewalls from collapsing. Backfill soil will come from Utah Pit, a borrow area on the Base about 2 miles away.

Quang Than  
Lead Agency Contact Person

( 714 ) 484-5352  
Phone #

\_\_\_\_\_  
DTSC Branch Chief Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

John Scandura, Branch Chief  
DTSC Branch Chief Name

Southern Californian Operations Branch,  
Office of Military Facilities  
DTSC Branch Chief Title

**TO BE COMPLETED BY OPR ONLY**

**Date Received For Filing and Posting at OPR:** \_\_\_\_\_

